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1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division Museum, rich in history

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Housed in a yellow building and surrounded by armored vehicles sits a link to the past and a glimpse of the present of the 1st Armored Division. In Baumholder, Germany heritage and history collide at the 1AD museum.

The 1st Armored Division museum tells the story of the men and women who have served their country while wearing the patch of the 1st AD. Displays both inside and outside trace the entire history of the 1st AD, from its beginnings in 1940 to its recent mission as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Outside we have all kinds of armored vehicles on display," said Sgt. Joe Collins, military liaison and former infantryman for 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry. "Everything from Sherman tanks and troop carriers to captured Iraqi armor. We even have some old cannons outback."

Most of the vehicles are non-operational and are simply display pieces that are cleaned and repainted on a regular basis. But, some still run and are used by local historical re-enactors, explained Collins.

Inside the museum are numerous exhibits that tell the history of 1 AD. Most of the exhibits are of old weapons and uniforms from the first two world wars, the Korean conflict and the Vietnam conflict. Photos and items such as old rations also relate the history of 1 AD.

"My favorite display is a miniature replication of an entire brigade from World War II," Collins said. "It has tanks, infantry and artillery. It took me two days to set up and I love the three dimensionality of it."

In addition to mannequins wearing old uniforms and displays of obsolete weapons, there are also exhibits that show different aspects of war.

"My favorite exhibit is the German propaganda pamphlets from World War II," said Molly Bombane, museum specialist, and current museum curator. "They show a very different aspect of war."

Bombane has a Bachelor of Arts in Archeology from George Washington University. Bombane has been the 1 AD museum's curator since December of 2005.

"I have worked at museums before, it is always fun and interesting," Bombane said. "Working at a military museum is really no different then working at a regular museum. We follow the same standards and ethics as any other museum, there is actually an Army regulation for museums, AR 878-18."

For Bombane, Collins and the others who work at the 1 AD museum, it is more than just a building with a bunch of old weapons and rusty tanks.

"This museum is really a learning tool. It's a piece of 1 AD and Army heritage and is here for the benefit of everyone, including Soldiers."